

# LETTERS.

## By Israel Atkinson

To Mr. Hipwell.

Brighton: August 9th, 1864.

My Christian Brother,

Looking over the last page of the Voice of Truth this afternoon, I read the information given there of Olney. Under any circumstances, wishing well, as I do, to the kingdom of Jesus, I should have felt an interest in such a piece of information; but it will not surprise you if I say that certain recollections of something which occurred here some few years ago made it peculiarly interesting and gratifying to me.

Go on? My brother, in the good work, and God be with you! Remember that you have received freely, and that you are to give freely. Your own salvation, by your own testimony, is a salvation all of mercy, and that mercy a great mercy—a mercy one of whose terms is the bottomless depths of hell, and the other the topless heights of heaven. Preach that as and for salvation to others which you have found to be unto salvation in your own case. Magnify the precious blood of Christ above all the damning and the depraving power of sin. Let sin have its just designation and mercy its rightful glory.

Buy the truth at all cost, and sell it at no price. He who sells the truth foolishly saps the foundation on which himself stands, and wickedly robs the Mediator of a gem from His crown.

I trust that you have so learned Christ as to preserve you from those crooked ways in which so many go aside, after appearing to run well for a

time. Remember that the Gospel is in principle a direct antagonism to the world, and can never in truth have the world's esteem. I hope you have counted the cost. Not many mighty, and wise, and noble—not many of the elite are called; and you may have to part company with some, and to associate with others, which may try your love to Jesus and humble the pride of your heart. God in mercy keep you steadfast in the truth, whose company and friendship soever it may cost you.

I have written this line on the spur of the moment, influenced, no doubt, by the recollection I have of you, wishing you well and prosperity to the kingdom of our Lord by you at Olney. Accept the well wish, my dear brother, of

*Yours in Jesus,  
Israel Atkinson.*

To Mr. Hipwell.

Brighton: August 23rd, 1864.

My dear Christian Brother,

I have, as you may very well suppose, read your letter with a peculiar interest and pleasure. God speed you, my brother. Satan will do what he can without and within to hinder you. This is his custom. His kingdom never suffers more by the public ministry of the Word, perhaps, than when it is preached by a brand plucked from the burning. Such an one will tell the tale of mercy in a manner which, under the Lord's blessing, will have the effect of ousting that usurper, and of delivering the lawful captive from his dominion. That mighty spirit can laugh at an abstract testimony of the truth, but the testimony of the truth by one who has obtained mercy of the Lord one to whom the Gospel has come not in word only but in power, he will, for

sufficient reasons, be sure to oppose to the utmost of his power. No doubt it has been suggested to you that you have run unseparated from God, and there is no doubt in my mind that it was that old liar who suggested it. God never did, and He never will, make either a believer or a preacher just right for the devil. You must not expect to be more to his taste, nor to be treated more considerately by him than your predecessors. Where everything is to his mind he takes no exception and makes no opposition. You may ever regard satanic malice as a token for good. You know what was done in the green tree, and may look for the same in the dry.

Lift the Lord Jesus up, my brother, as high as you can. Try to avoid mere abstract statements of truth. Aim to show the bearing of the Gospel on the interests of the poor and needy all along the journey from the City of Destruction to the passage of the river. Try to say that which shall give occasion for the witness of the Spirit in the hearts of your hearers. Illustrate the life of religion by your own experience. Avoid the technicalities of controversies, but hold fast the faithful Word. And before and after all your studies, readings, and public labors, honor the Holy Ghost by prayerful dependence on Him and desire to Him for His blessing.

That the God of all my mercies may enrich you, and make many rich by you in the faith of Christ and hope of eternal life, is the sincere heart prayer of, my dear brother,

*Affectionately yours in Jesus,  
Israel Atkinson.*

To Mr. A. Streeter.  
38, Rose Hill Terrace,  
Brighton: Oct. 18th, 1865.

My dear Brother,

Your letter came safely to hand, and while I read it I truly wept with you in your weeping and rejoiced with you in your rejoicing. The ordinary trials of life affect the believer more than they do the unbeliever, because the believer recognizes an all-seeing, all-governing God at the helm of his affairs, and feels in the ordinary trials of his life solemn trials of his faith in the truth of the character and the testimony of his God. "If He is my Father," he reasons, a why is this? " And perhaps he is almost ready to say, " I would not, had I the power to prevent it, suffer my child to be thus tried; how is it then that my Father in heaven, who calls the earth and its fullness His own, and without whom it is said a sparrow does not fall to the ground, suffers me to be so tried and afflicted ? " What an hour this is for Satan! And he never fails to catch an opportunity when one offers. How fearfully will he under such trials stir up by the force of his terrible temptations the inborn infidelity of the poor believer's heart! And how he sometimes succeeds to lodge a hard thought of God in the heart, and to fetch out of it a hard word ! And what bleeding and brokenness of heart some of us have had on account of a temporary mastery he has gained over us, and induced us to think and to say with Job, when under his trial he unadvisedly said, " Thou art become cruel unto me " !

But our Father "knoweth our frame, He remembereth we are dust." And He takes care that whenever our faith is tried, that it shall also triumph. "He hath delivered," and He is pledged to deliver us from every evil work and worker unto His everlasting kingdom. What He does not preserve us from He will sustain us in, carry us through, and at last deliver us from entirely. Tribulation, yea, much tribulation, is the lot of God's elect in this

world, and He that destined them to pass through it determined its measure, and has put Himself under promise that their strength shall be equal to their day. If in passing through it their faith sometimes fails, His faithfulness never will, and herein lies their safety and well-being. If Satan may succeed to weaken my faith, this shall only serve to demonstrate the more fully the faithfulness of my God. The devil may for a time rob me of my comforts, but he can never touch my interest. The sapling that bends to the storm becomes deeper rooted by its means ; so the storms of trial and temptation do not uproot but down root the plants of Jehovah's planting, and make them the more fruitful in all godliness. My brother, Jehovah has said He "will be a Father" to us. For time and for eternity this is enough for you and for

*Yours affectionately,*

*Israel Atkinson.*

To Mr. White.

Brighton: March 22nd, 1870.

My dear Friend,

Yours is to hand, and, having attentively read it, I will try to answer it. At the outset I am forcibly reminded of a word in the Proverbs: "He that justifieth the wicked and he that condemneth the just, even they both are an abomination to the Lord." Feeling as I do the force of these words, I also feel that it behooves me to write with care, lest I do that on the one hand or the other which is an abomination to the Lord.

Now it appears to me and I wish to say so at once that all the objections you make in your letter to the ministry you mention are not to be that is, cannot be sustained by the word and spirit of the Gospel of Christ. On all these matters my motto is, "To the law and to the testimony I If I find

myself holding an opinion and cherishing a feeling not warranted by the Word of God; or, on the other hand, if I find myself holding in detestation opinions and feelings which are approved by the Word of God, I reverse my opinions and feelings at all cost. I am little enough to say that in many things I have been and am a learner. He who has lived a lifetime without learning has not lived to much purpose, and he who is too wise to learn is a fool.

If I say God has not saved me for my own sake, no man can impeach that saying in the name of the truth of God before those who remember it is written, "Not for your sakes," &c., and other similar passages. And if I say I ought not to be so swallowed up in my own salvation as to care nothing about the salvation of other people, I shall only express a fact I deeply feel, and a feeling that is thoroughly approved by the Scriptures of truth. David, I remember, said, "Rivers of water run down mine eyes because they keep not Thy law." How deep Paul's feelings were, and how strong his desires and earnest his prayer to God for Israel were "that they might be saved" he has told us in the opening of the ninth and tenth chapters of his epistle to the Romans, When God promised to bless Abraham, He doubled His promise with this remarkable addition, "And thou shalt be a blessing." In the very spirit of that promise also we find the Church praying in {Psalms. 67}: in these words:— " God be merciful unto us and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us, that Thy way may be known upon earth, Thy saving health among all nations." And the desire of one who knows the Lord Jesus to bring another to Jesus, who may be ignorant of Him, is a truly Christian desire, which is abundantly approved by the Scriptures, as, among other instances, may be seen in {John. 1: 43-46}.

The mischief lies not in opinions and feelings and statements such as

these, but in making use of these thoroughly approved matters as an introduction or support to the doctrines of free will and duty faith doctrines which, as I am solemnly persuaded, are not only not found in the Scriptures, and therefore untrue, but are also more than ordinarily pernicious in their influence on the mind of the uncalled, and the called, to say nothing now of their antagonism to the honor of the Triune God in the grand business of salvation.

What to advise I hardly know. I make no doubt the principles of free will are introduced there. If such be the case, were I similarly situated, I should either make a stand for the truth or seek the truth elsewhere. You cannot resign your membership. The law of the churches knows nothing of the resignation of membership. If you decide to remove, you must ask some other church to send for a dismissal. The Lord guide you. Take care to have a scriptural reason for any course you may take. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Be fully persuaded in your own mind, but take care that your mind is persuaded according to the Word, that you may only be persuaded to "approve things that are excellent." That the blessing of the Lord may rest on you and your household is the fervent desire of.

*Yours in Him who is All in All,  
Israel Atkinson.*

To his Daughter, Mrs. Bax (shortly after her marriage).

Brighton: December 19th, 1871.

My precious Child,

We are in the last days of the year 1871, and I am unwilling the year shall end before sending you a line. This year will be a memorable period to you and to me. Even yet I am scarcely at times awake to the reality that my

house is no longer your home ; that I am not in your present absence to look for 'what has always been looked for before in your absence' your return.

To you this year has opened a beginning the end of which we cannot nor would we wish to see. It will be enough for you to occupy your place well, and leave the end with your Father in heaven. Oh that He may bestow on you all needful grace to occupy well in every vicissitude! But this will be impossible 'I mean the profitable occupation of your place under all changes' without the maintenance of the vitality of your spiritual life.

Look well to this fact, child. Remember always that religion is a life something more than a profession, a creed, and an outward worship. These are but the body of which religion is the soul, the life; and these without the soul are but as a dead body.

Subjectively, your spiritual life is Christ living in you in the power of His mediatorial character. He is thus the life of your righteousness, your sanctification, your redemption, and your reconciliation; and a living realization of Him as such will bring you an experienced justification and purity and freedom and peace, Christ thus realized will enable you to understand the meaning and to feel the force of Paul's words, " I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." This, subjectively, is life. To have this maintained well is of the utmost importance in all Christians, and especially in those who are called to hold conspicuous positions in the church. And the maintenance of your spiritual life, objectively considered, is of equal importance—I mean the outcome of your life God-ward, the outcome of a living repentance, a living faith, a living love, and a living hope. See to this. Be sure the vitality of your life is low if repentance dwindles to a wordy acknowledgment, if faith appropriates nothing, if love is without emotion,

and if hope never stands tiptoe. And there is an order of things usually to be found here. As, originally, repentance is in the living soul the first outcome of spiritual life, so, subsequently, in the every day life of the godly repentance goes before the other out comings, and leads them. A healthful spirit of repentance will be sure to draw faith into exercise, and then faith will draw love and hope and joy in its train.

A penitent spirit is as the mainspring of action to all the others. Without humble, godly sorrow for sin kept alive —occasion for which, I need not tell you, will be constant as the day—your spiritual life towards God will be sure to be in a languid condition, and the reasons are not far to seek. He that has little or no occasion to be humbled under sin has little or no need to believe in Christ crucified. Men do not play at believing in Christ. Faith is not a plaything but a necessary power for an essential purpose, and its necessity to any of us is in proportion to our sense of sin. u Repentance toward God," in the whole life of the Christian, must, by necessity of the nature of things, precede "faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Seek therefore, my child, first of all an humble penitent spirit.

Standing where you do, you may 'I trust you will' come into contact with the broken-hearted, and, indeed, with every other variety of form and development of spiritual character, and it will be a luxury to speak to such a word in season; but the best condition to be in to speak well to any of them is the sympathetic, and this is a condition to be felt, not acted. Aim, not ostentatiously and unnaturally, but with the naturalness of life, to be, in respect to those about you, as a candle in a candlestick, trimmed and light-giving. Were I in your place with my convictions about what a pastor's wife should be and do, one of the principal things I would study would be to make the

way to my husband's study easy to him, and the place attractive to him when there. That is the laboratory of the workman in the ministry. It is there mainly that he gets his preparation of the heart for his public labors. And as his power and usefulness lie in his public ministrations, it is impossible to overrate the importance of preparation in the study. Without reading and prayer the mind soon comes to think in a circle, and that circle grows narrower rather than wider. Freshness of thought begets a newness of interest, and it is the interested speaker only who succeeds to interest listeners. And if a speaker cannot take possession of the ear, he can never get at the heart, simply because, to him, there is no other way there. It is the eloquence of thought spoken with feeling rather than the eloquence of words that reaches the heart, and this is only obtained as the heart of the speaker is brought into thorough sympathy with the subject of discourse. And the action of the truth which creates, at least in me, that needful heart-glowing sympathy is comparable rather to the action of a charcoal fire than to a lightning flash. I am warmed rather than blasted into the hallowed condition.

But I must leave off. It is within a few minutes of dinner-time.

Had a telegram yesterday from Mrs. Pearson, of Kenardington, informing me of her husband's death, and requesting me to preach at Bethersden on next Lord's-day, which I cannot do; and have another telegram at this moment requesting me to preach there on Christmas-day, which also I cannot do.

You will not be sorry that Mr. and Mrs. Dodd are seeking a home amongst us again. Mrs. Field also is coming with them. I hope to give them the right hand on the first Lord's-day of the coming year.

The club people received their cards on Monday evening—in high glee, as I understand.

Poor old Mr. Virgo, of Portslade, is not well again. And Mrs. Patching is far from well.

Wishing you and yours the compliments of the season, with a regard that is something more than complimentary. God bless you. So prays

*Your affectionate Father,*

*Israel Atkinson.*

To Mr. White.

Brighton: April 18th, 1872.

My dear Brother,

Whether or not we have the gift and the mission, we all of us, perhaps, do at times a little prophesying about our neighbors and friends. I think, to say sooth, I did a little of this business respecting your removal from Brighton, and I remember it was an ill boded word. Men do sometimes some very female things, and among others this:—when they have prophesied any uncomfortable prophecy, they say they wish it may not come to pass, but if it does come to pass, they are sure to say, "That's just how I said it would be," and from the manner in which they express themselves about the fulfillment of their prophecy, it would be difficult to form the opinion that they would have been very glad to have been convicted of being false prophets. Lord, what is man!

If I venture now on a word of advice, it shall be this:—Listen reverently to that word you heard on going to bed the other night. If He undertakes to do all that for you all will be well. Hold Him to His word; He will not be displeased with any boldness you may use in such a case. Only take care

the boldness does not degenerate to anything like impudence; and take care of the spirit in which you receive His guiding, if He should happen to lead you in a way you know not, or in a way you may not happen to like. Moreover, it may be well to remember that He sometimes guides by driving as well as by leading; but whether He leads or drives, "Speak, Lord, Thy servant heareth," will be the best spirit in which to receive the one or the other. His sheep ever

*"Are led or driven only where  
They best and safest may abide. "*

Perhaps—I know not whether it was so—you needed to learn a practical lesson of the relative value of things temporal and things spiritual, of the merchandise of silver and of wisdom, and that you have been sent to Deptford College by your Father with the view of improving your education in these subjects, and if so, I trust that you will take academics honors and come out an M.A., for your own benefit and for the good of others.

Remember you might have been in a worse condition, with the misery of a worse condition deepened by not having so great and so good a Friend putting Himself under a promise to instruct and guide you.

I wish you much grace to enable you to turn His promises into prayers, and shall be glad to hear of gracious answers. To know of your welfare will ever be a pleasure to, my dear brother,

*Yours affectionately in Him,  
Israel Atkinson.*

To Mr. Hipwell.  
Brighton: June 1872.

My dear Brother,

I am thoroughly in accord with you about the sentiments of the religious world in general, and question much the motive and the beneficial tendency of the wonderful activity seen on all hands. But, accustomed to criticise my own motives and actions in the light, and to judge them according to the standard of the truth, I sometimes more than doubt whether my own activity will not suffer very seriously by a comparison with theirs whose sentiments I dislike, and whose motives I suspect. I more than doubt whether in some things they do not justly put me to an open shame. If possible, the older I grow the more dear are the precious doctrines of grace to me, and the more utterly I am out of all sympathy with those who repudiate them. But I am also, if possible, growingly anxious that these blessed doctrines should bear their own natural and legitimate influence on my whole soul, and should produce their own natural effects on my whole life. I want a Christ-likeness—the spirit of Christ, the mind of Christ, the image of Christ. I want to be what I am called—Christian. I want to realize what Paul did when he said, “For me to live is Christ,” He, I find, so believed these precious doctrines that, under their living influence, his heart’s desire and prayer to God was that the kingdom of Christ might be extended. And this was no empty wish, for connectedly therewith he was for this end abundant in labors, instant in season and out of season, and unmoved from his object by all the multiform and multiplied afflictions he endured in the prosecution of his soul’s desire. My salvation is to me as great as his was to him: the mercy as rich, the grace as free, the power as mighty, and the debt, therefore, as large. But when I put the living and active expression of his soul’s gratitude in his consecrated life beside my own, I am filled with shame and self-aborrence. And I feel and say these things with a full consciousness, gained by years of

experience that I am entirely dependent on the vital influence of the Holy Ghost to work in me both to will and to do. But this consciousness is connected with an undoubted conviction that if I make the Spirit's working in me the rule of my activity in the service of God, I shall frame to myself a fleshly excuse for spiritual sloth, and shall abuse a holy doctrine by using it for an unholy purpose. And a genuine dependence on the Holy Spirit is not inert and dead, but vital and active. Genuine dependence puts the soul into a laboring, not into a lolling, posture. Dependence on the Holy Ghost is not a lullaby for spiritual laziness, but an instrument for spiritual industry. Moreover, God having given life to His people, speaks of and to them as living individuals. They have the blessed advantages of being His servants and His children; and, while they enjoy the privileges, they are under the obligations of their high relation. He expects honor from them as their Father and fear from them as their Master, and He complains when these are withheld. He complains when blind, lame, and sick sacrifices are offered to Him. He complained that Ephraim was "a cake not turned," and that the Laodiceans were "neither cold nor hot," and in many another instance beside. I confess I read these things with feelings of self-condemnation rather than of self-pity. I am sure that, for me, in reading the Epistle to the Romans, it would not be a healthy course to leave off at the end of the eleventh chapter. Blessed Lord! Let my life be an embodiment of the exhortation, "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

I think a scribbling propensity has got hold on me— what is technically called 'cacoethes scribendi' for this is the second unreasonably long letter I have written this week. Pray allow the well wish to be an apology for this weakness of, my dear brother,

*Yours affectionately in Him,  
Israel Atkinson.*

To his Youngest Son.

Brighton: January 9th, 1873.

My dear Boy,

I take it, that, according to commonly-received opinion and usage, you are considered now to have arrived at that period of life when children go out of parental leading-strings and are no longer subject to parental restraint. That having attained the age of manhood, you now lay aside the tutelage of your natural guardian and assume a man's responsibilities. As this affords an opportunity, and as, while laying down the office of your guardian, I still retain without the slightest abatement the affection of your father, and an equal solicitude for your welfare, I will embrace the opportunity to say a word to you, and I will first of all say that I think it scarcely possible that any father ever brought up a son till the age of twenty-one years who had, in the discharge of his natural duty, less cause for anxiety, suffered less trouble, or experienced less sorrow, than you have given me. While this is a matter of gratitude with me to God, on your account as well as on my own, I think it is right to say as much to you.

In view of the future (if you will allow me to say another tutelary word to you), you may assure yourself that success in life 'such success as when gained can be enjoyed in confidence and with comfort' as it ought not, so it cannot be attained by other means than a persevering industry linked to an unbending integrity and an irreproachable honesty. In the expressive language of the Scripture, it is very certain that "Through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through." So he that is wanting in integrity 'I

mean by integrity a thorough soundness of moral principle, bearing the fruit of a sound moral habit in every walk of life' can never be trusted, or only trusted so far as a latent suspicion that he is a disguised rogue will allow. And he that is deficient of honesty can only be dealt with as he is in fact 'a pest in society' a thing to be thrown out or stamped out.

If you will allow me herewith to offer a suggestion or two I will say—

Live within your means. 'Have a surplus and take care of it'. When want overtakes the thriftless a common occurrence he finds but little pity, and that little is more than he deserves ; and those who do pity him usually burn his heart with a caustic word when they put the dole of their pity into his miserable hand.

Owe no man anything. "This is a Scripture exhortation, and the wisdom of regarding it is unquestionable". If possible, never allow any man, friend or relation, to bear the character of your creditor. One means of avoiding this miserable condition—the Scriptures say, "The borrower is servant (it means SLAVE) to the lender"— is to avoid scrupulously all useless expenses. A shilling breaks the neck of a pound, a penny of a shilling; a penny spent uselessly is often the doom of a shilling, and so a shilling of a pound. Debt has ever been regarded as only one degree less evil than a crime; and it is quite within my recollection when in this country debtors were punished as criminals.

Aim to profit by your observation and experience. You have seen a little of life in others, and have experienced a little in your own. Make use of your observation and experience. Turn them to your account. Lay them under tribute. Make a market of them. The authorities of the Trinity House have, I think, published a chart of our coasts on which there are distinctly

shown, for the benefit of all who navigate our seas and rivers, the places of danger and channels of safety. Every man should make to himself for his guidance such a chart out of his own observation and experience.

Employ your leisure profitably. Ever have an object, and let it be a worthy one. If you take exercise, let it be for the benefit of your health. If you read, only read such books as may make you a wiser and a better man. If you go into company, let the company be select persons whose society will do you no discredit, and whose conversation may add to your knowledge or afford a wholesome enjoyment. The Book says, "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed." And the proverb says, "A man is known by his companions." Scrupulously avoid mere parties of pleasure, for if they may not justly be called idle, luxurious, and vicious, they usually have in them the elements of idleness, luxury, and vice, and therefore of ruin.

Study what is healthful to the body and the mind. 'Eschew everything unnatural relative to both'. As you value a sound mind in a healthy body, steadfastly resist every corrupt inclination, assuring yourself that to yield is to give yourself a wound for which there is no effectual cure is to kindle a self-consuming fire. Almost all the human wrecks you see around you are such through their own indiscretion; and thus, too, are the greater part of premature graves tenanted.

Ever remember that time is short. We are always within a step of eternity. Your precious mother, a few short months after she gave you birth, found "not indeed then for the first time" the need and the preciousness of the Sinner's Friend, at that season to which we usually— and rightly, as I think attach an unusual importance and solemnity. I recall whilst writing the

scenes of her last moments most vividly. "I can almost feel her hand gradually growing cold in mine over again!" I can almost re-hear her saying to me, on questioning her about Jesus,—“What could I do without Him now?” She is gone! gone to heaven; Israel and John I trust are with her. Heffy and Bekky I hope are on the road thither to join her. Oh how my heart yearns over my two boys! O God of my hope and my salvation, extend Thy mercy to my dear To and to my dear Eb!

The above was written yesterday—I could write no more then. God bless you, my dear boy. This is the constant prayer of

*Your affectionate Father,  
Israel Atkinson.*

To Mr. Mitchell.\*

Brighton: October 8th, 1873.

*\* Now of Guildford; a member with Mr. Atkinson at the date of the letter, and had but recently begun to preach the Word.*

My dear Edward,

I had a thoroughly characteristic letter from our warm-hearted brother Green the day after you were at Mount Zion, giving me your text and a brief outline of your remarks. It was to me, from the love I bear you, an unfeigned pleasure to learn from him that you were evidently helped on the occasion. He tells me you considered—

(1) *The characters addressed;*

(2) *Their condition;*

(3) *Probable motives for exhortation.*

Referring to your second head of discourse, he says, “By the rock from

which God's people were hewn he understood their legal condition, and by the pit he understood their moral condition."

Supposing he correctly caught what you said, you will, I think, on a reconsideration of the verse and connection, be of a different opinion. The ancestral meanness of the Jews did not prevent them from becoming a great nation; therefore their present condition, however reduced, if God would bless them, should make the desert as the garden of the Lord. Is not that more like the meaning? What then? It might have suggested for the purpose of preaching the Gospel the legal and moral condition of men by nature, though it clearly, to my mind, does not mean these.

You know, my dear Edward, that I love you; hence this word. I am anxious that in teaching meaning you should teach correct meaning. Often, as in this case, correct meaning will suggest another meaning or idea, and we may use this suggested meaning or idea with much propriety, but we should never advance such suggested idea as correct meaning.

That the God of my mercy may bless and prosper you is the fond wish and fervent prayer of, my dear Edward,

*Yours affectionately in Jesus,  
Israel Atkinson.*

To Mr. Mitchell.

38, Rose Hill Terrace,

Brighton: Oct, 10th, 1873.

My dear Edward,

Just a line to say yours, just received,\* affords me a sense of relief and pleasure. I was unwilling to come to the conclusion you had advanced the notion that the legal and moral condition of men in nature is the exposition of

Isaiah li. 1, but thought it best to communicate with you at once, knowing the danger some have fallen into of advancing fair suggestion for exposition; and I beg you will place to the account of the affection I bear you my concern about the matter.

Now I trust what I have said will not in future hamper you in the consideration of any text which may arrest your attention as and for a text. Fair suggestion is never to be disregarded. Rather, every such suggestion is to be sought out for Gospel purposes and used. Give the rein to what power of reflection God has given you, so long as the imagination shall not override the judgment. I knew a man who found the five cardinal doctrines of the Gospel "the five points" and the two ordinances of the Church in the five loaves and two small fishes of the miracle. I entertain no fear whatever that my dear Edward's imagination will run riot after such a fashion, but am at the same time most earnestly desirous there shall never be any the remotest approach to anything as exposition beside the mind of the Spirit. Your services on Wednesday were most cheering. The Livingstone Road child seems a thoroughly healthy one; God grant it may grow up to be a robust man.

Felt constrained to scratch this hasty line. Shall just catch the post.  
God bless you, my very dear Edward. So prays Affectionately yours,  
*\*Being in reply to the foregoing letter from Mr. Atkinson.*

*Israel Atkinson.*

*To Mr. Mitchell.*

To Mr. Mitchell.

Brighton: October 21st, 1873.

My dear Edward,

I feel so much pleased with the turn things have taken with you 'I mean the fortnightly release' as to be constrained by this line to say so.

It seems to me to bear the clear impress of Providence upon it. You will now have fair opportunity of listening to any requests which may be made to you to occupy a pulpit here and there, beside any occupation you may have at Livingstone Road. And in all this business you will do well to wait on the Lord, and to wait for Him. The servant should seek to receive, not only his commission in general, but also his particular directions, from the Master. You know it is said, "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." It may require and will, perhaps, in your case some wisdom to interpret the leadings of the Master's hand; but there will usually be such a combination of circumstances as will sufficiently indicate His will something by which we may assuredly gather that the Lord calls us to this or that. If I can at all serve you herein it will be a happiness to me to do so.

In some other men I have seen two opposite dangers fallen into—one a running before, and the other a slowness in following after. And as a great part of the value of history is to enable us to avoid error by the mistakes of others, you will do well to observe the dangers I have mentioned, just as the mariner observes the beacons and the light-ships of our seas while he is navigating them.

I know not whether you possess a Concordance to the Bible ; if not, permit me to say, Get one of Cruden's at once.

Memory—mine at least—while it is in some things what has been called cruelly faithful, is in other things faithlessly treacherous. A little pocket-book, therefore, may be of inestimable value to you for the purpose of noting down a text which may occur to you, and therewith any thought

thereon, while you may be employed at your ordinary avocation.

The Lord go before you and bless you is the prayer of Affectionately

*yours in Jesus,*

*Israel Atkinson.*

To Miss Light.

38, Rose Hill Terrace,

Brighton: Dec. 9th, 1875.

My dear Sister and own Child in the Lord,

Full-handed as I am, the pleasant duty of writing you a line must have an opportunity for its discharge.

Am glad to learn that you are benefitting in health by your change, and that there is no trick afoot to hold you permanently from Brighton. To have my children removed from me is almost next to the pain and unpleasantness of being deserted by them. Am always glad when the bounds of their habitation are so fixed in Providence that they can assemble weekly at home.

Yes, child, it is so; Ebenezer, with all its faults and shortcomings, is, as you observe, "dear? May it ever remain so to them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity; may there be many more such to share the precious privileges we are permitted to enjoy ; and may our advantages there be multiplied and increased a thousand fold!

We had, on the whole, an interesting church meeting on the 29th ult. The testimonies were all accepted; but some, as is usually the case, found a particularly warm acceptance. One young man, especially, found a short way to the hearts of all of us. He had been brought to know the Lord among the General Baptists. When he heard me at first he was dead opposed to

my sentiments. He complimented me on the masterly manner, as he said, in which my opinions were advanced, but he nevertheless did not receive them. Still, somehow, he got birdlimed and bound, and after a while he found that my theology harmonized with his religion better than his own, and in the end he came to embrace my doctrines as warmly as before he had spurned them. He seems to be a young man of more than ordinary intelligence, and I wish and hope he may be a blessing; although, I am sorry to say, he suffers from a difficulty of hearing from a deafness arising from an illness in childhood. This is a little fruit of the Pavilion labors.

We are all about in our usual health, through mercy. Heffy is looking to become a mother again next month, and I regret to say that she has been all along, and is now, somewhat downcast about it this time. I mention this to ask of you the favor, for my sake and hers, to pray for her.

Our aged brother Westgate appears to us and to himself to be very near the end, but we are assured and he knows that home is at the end.

I wish you the true and the best Christmas cheer at Christmastide. Now I must turn my attention from you to the work of the evening. Grace be with you everywhere and always. So prays, my dear Christian sister and child,

*Yours affectionately in Him,  
Israel Atkinson.*

To Mr. Norman.

[No date]

My very dear Christian Brother,

I was glad to have a line from you, but was grieved with the contents, and could not forbear sending a message about you to heaven immediately,

and I felt a yearning desire to send you a line at once, and, if it might be, speak a word to your bowed down spirit, but have deferred doing so until now lest I should appear officious.

Let me remind you that your God is on His throne. You know I have received a commission to say unto Zion, "Thy God reigneth." It seems fitting to say this to you at this time. This trouble is not without Him. His hand is in it all with some determinate design, and over it all infallibly to bring that design to pass. And, moreover, bear in mind that, as He is good in His nature, so He has transferred the goodness of His nature over into His every covenant relation with His people, and that, as everything He designs is meant unto good for them, so in all He does He works all things together for good to them. This fact secures Thomas Norman against all possible harm from any trouble which may befall him. No evil can happen to the just by all the troubles which may come upon him, while the kingdom of the just man's God ruleth over all.

God has given to us many exceeding great and precious promises, that by them we may be partakers of the divine nature 'that is, partakers of Himself'. I speak not as a novice in the matter of trouble—trouble has, indeed, whitened my head before the time—neither do I speak with heartless hardness of my dear brother's troubles when I say, "Count it all joy." God means by this trouble, among other things, to set you pleading some of His precious promises, which in any other condition you could not do appropriately, that He may fulfill His wondrous word and make you a partaker of Himself in forms of character and in a degree never, perhaps, known to you before. "Tribulation worketh patience and patience experience 'that experience which is a practical proof by test of what God is to the souls

of His people in the day of their trouble'. This blessed fact made Paul and his companions in trial even "glory in tribulations." They knew the evil would be overruled. They knew that every flood should be safely forded, and every fire safely passed, and that there was a wealthy place on the other side of every flood and every fire into which their God would bring them a place where they should realize the wealth of the name of the Lord more fully revealed, and His precious truth more abundantly verified on their behalf.

God is, my dear brother, a Strength, but it is to the needy in his distress; a Refuge, but this is from the storm; a Shadow, but this is from the heat; a Hiding-place, but this is from the wind ; a Covert, but this is from the tempest; as Rivers of water, but these are in a dry place; as the Shadow of a great Rock, but this is in a weary land. An appropriate condition is requisite for the manifestation on His part and for the appreciation on our part of God's blessed character. And He, He in His providence, brings about the appropriate condition for these ends. Why was the man born blind {John. 9: 4}, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him ? Why did Lazarus fall sick and die "but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby"? And why is Thomas Norman so "full of trouble" but that the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort should glorify Himself and rejoice the soul of His servant by comforting him in all his tribulations, and by being the Lifter up of his head?

"The Lord raiseth them that are bowed down." This text struck my mind when I read your letter, and I preached from it yesterday morning. It was attended, I have reason to believe, with much comfort to many. May the mention of it comfort your heart and raise your hope! Jacob got a new name out of his trouble, and God, I trust, has got some like blessing in store for

you.

How glad I should be to be able to afford you relief! How cheerfully should I leap to do so! But then this is only a very common Christian feeling. What then? If a Christian feels thus for an afflicted brother, what shall we say of Christ, of whom the best of us is but a very poor resemblance? If I, who am but a poor evil creature, am touched with the feeling of my brother's infirmities, what shall I say about, and what may you not hope for from, Jesus being touched with the feeling of your sorrow, and from His being afflicted in all your afflictions ?

*[Part of this letter is lost]*

To Mr. Mitchell.

Brighton: February 1st, 1877.

My dear Edward,

I had thought a good deal about you, and am obliged by the line you sent me. I am not surprised that you feel unsettled in mind about the present condition of your affairs, nor that you should feel considerable anxiety about taking a step leading to a permanent change. I need not say to you that you are heartily welcome to any help that you may think I may be able to give you; but after all that your wisest and best friends can do for you in a matter of this kind, it will be necessary for you to depend on your own judgment of what may appear to be the will of God concerning you.

I suspect that you could not make a permanent change without pecuniary loss, and in any case there would be what in common parlance is called risk, and these are somewhat formidable considerations to a husband and a father. Many men have not been deterred by these considerations; in some instances the confidence has been justified by events, in others it has

not.

How the heart lies should be, I think, in your case 'I do not think so in every case' a matter of the highest importance in forming a judgment, whether you feel that you could "give thyself wholly" to the work, and make an every day and all the day work of it. Generally speaking, honest, persistent labor is the root of success, because God blesses it. But to keep on and on, instant in season, out of season, requires some heart for this business, and there is in at times not a little to bruise and crush the soul out of a man.

If I am writing in a somewhat deterrent strain, let me add that I know of no one whom it would better please me to see sent into God's harvest, nor one that might more justly hope for success by the Lord's blessing on earnest and persistent labor,  
Say when you will run down that I may arrange to be at home. The Lord bless you and yours.

*Yours in Him,  
Israel Atkinson.*

To Mr. Mitchell.  
38, Rose Hill Terrace,  
Brighton: Oct, 24th, 1877.

My dear Edward,

Yours of the 22nd came duly to hand. It had the effect of transporting me back to 1842, when I had as best I could to weigh and decide on the like momentous question. I say momentous question, because, at least to me, it was such. No question of equal moment in itself had ever before been submitted to my judgment and decision, and no one which involved matters

of so peculiar, high, and lasting interest to me personally and relatively. It was, as it respected my social position and prospects, the greatest turning point of my life; and the consequences, whatever these might be, I knew it was most probable would be lifelong. It was also a leaving the tried for the untried, and the comparatively certain for the comparatively uncertain, so far as the means of living were concerned, both for myself and for those who had a natural right to look to me for support. It was as a launching upon an unknown sea to one unused to the ocean altogether, and a going where I had not passed theretofore. I knew what were the yearning, almost the consuming, desires of my heart in the matter; but I also knew that it was not safe to put an implicit trust in them. I knew indeed that some had succeeded, but I also knew that others had most miserably failed. I thought of my qualifications with what honesty of purpose I could command, but could find no sufficient grounds for confidence in them. I thought on God and was hopeful.

But what was the will of God? To know this was the grand desideratum, and became the fervent desire. The bolstering help of all without Him I knew would end in confusion and that if He sent and furnished and prospered, every opposition would be blown away like the smoke out of the chimney. I asked Him to be my Counselor, and He more than granted my request, for He became my Guide. I should wrong Him if I were to say He had not been with me. The terms of my commission are, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." However feebly, deficiently, and unsatisfactorily I have discharged my mission, I would affectionately say of Him, "Gracious is the Lord and righteous; yea, our God is merciful."

My heart's desire is that you may go, being led; otherwise I would not you should go. To go on this business, being sent and furnished and prospered, is what an angel might covet, and no other man has a mission which for its desirableness is worthy to be mentioned with that of the minister of the Gospel of Christ, whom God blesses and makes a blessing. But to go on this business unsent and without receiving perpetual furnishings and blessings would be the most thankless and undesirable employment in which any man could be engaged.

You know already that my hope for you corresponds with my desire. But in nothing more than about this business ought a man to be satisfied from himself. In a day of adversity you could not, in any sense, feed on the fervent desires and fond hopes of even your best and best-intentioned friends.

Respecting the resolution of which you have sent a copy, I think that is as unanimous and warm as anything you are entitled to expect. I am also exceedingly pleased to learn from you that the matter was conducted in a thoroughly business-like manner. This augurs well.

Try, my dear Edward, ever to bear in mind in all your preparations for the pulpit that religion is a life, and that therefore the ministry of religion needs to be a living one. All life needs the means of living. The wants of your own life will be one of your best guides in this matter. "Feed My sheep and My Lambs," said the great Shepherd to Peter. "Feed the Church of God," said Paul to the elders at Ephesus.

The Lord guide your judgment in this momentous business. If He sends and furnishes and prospers you, no one of those who know and love you will rejoice more than will, my dear Edward,

*Yours most affectionately in Him,  
Israel Atkinson.*

To Mr. Mitchell.

Brighton: November 13th, 1877.

My dear Edward,

Just a line in acknowledgment of yours. Your decision, which I dared not say more about than I did in my last, is just what I most fervently desired, and I thank God for it.

Let me just warn you that, so to speak, having passed the Rubicon, you will be open to temptation, and the tempter, from what I know of him, is not likely to let the opportunity pass. He is a liar 'don't forget this fact. God is all-sufficient' cherish this precious truth. Lay yourself out to the full. Spend and be spent. Never spare a good thing for a better opportunity to use it. Aim to live on God by the day for the day. Try to get a whole heartedness and a whole souledness into the whole business. An unsympathetic preacher of the Gospel is less a thing of life and less deserves such a designation than a machine, for iron, you know better than I, will warm in its work.

The Lord bless you! He is able to make all grace abound. See what He has done for some who have begun not half so well furnished as yourself, nor half so advantageously in other respects. Lay everything under tribute that you can, and hope in God.

I forget whether I said anything to you about Faith in my last. It is promised next week, but the performance is doubtful. It will appeal a good deal too much to the understanding to be popular, and I look to suffer a heavy pecuniary loss. But it is a little tribute to my precious Lord, and if He

will use it to the advancement of His truth, I shall be well content. Like everything else to which I have ever put my hand, I think I could do it better if I had to do it again.

I trust my dear Lizzie will be schooled of the Lord Himself for the part she will probably have to take in future. If she will follow my advice so far, she will be courteous to and cautious of everybody be everybody's friend and the special confidant of nobody.

God bless you both. So prays

*Your affectionate Pastor,  
Israel Atkinson.*

To Mr. Mitchell.

Brighton: June 27th, 1879.

My dear Edward,

The Lord willing, if spared and well, I shall be from home on the 14th—that is, the second Lord's-day— of September. I shall therefore be glad if you will supply for me on that day, and give the people a sermon also on the Thursday evening before or after, as may be convenient to yourself.

I was glad to hear through Lizzie last evening that you are well. I trust that earnest labor in the Word of God to know the mind of the Spirit will continue to be thoroughly congenial and highly profitable, and that your profiting may appear to all. As for me, I am getting to be a poor do-nothing, and it will be a mercy if the rust of 'I will not yet confess to idleness' disuse does not eat into me, and make me like a metal vessel with a hole in it. My head will not stand the work as heretofore, and is neither amenable to flogging nor patting. If a prudent man cannot do as he would, he will do what

he can, and if he cannot rule his head, will be as content as he can to let his head rule him.

Well, the Lord of all is our Father" a truth, this, that is convertible to our account in any condition.

Grace be to you here and glory hereafter. So prays,

*Affectionately yours in Him,*

*Israel Atkinson.*

To Mr. Elliott.

38, Rose Hill Terrace,

Brighton: July 14th, 1880.

My dear George,

Though I do not feel equal to write to you at length, your kind and sympathetic letter demands and must have an acknowledgment.

Having passed through life till a little more than a year ago in comparative health, to be ill and unable to work are to me new experiences. In the present instance there seems to be considerable functional derangement of the kidneys, and this form of disease, I am told, is generally very intractable. I am, however, considerably better than I was a week ago, and if I might regard the improvement as radical, I might think my condition to be hopeful, but of this I do not know. I am conscious of fluctuations of being better and worse, worse and better, and I confess that relapses are in experience, whatever they may be in theory, not encouraging to hope. Still, being on the whole better to a considerable degree, I am willing desirous to hope for recovery.

My communing with death' and these have been frequent of late have revealed to me nothing about that solemnity that makes it in my estimation

at all more natural or desirable in itself than I knew heretofore. After all that may be predicated of a Christian's dying, and all that he himself may experience in his dissolution, I am glad for myself that I have only to die once, and should, moreover, be more pleased if I could altogether escape the being "unclothed." This, however, cannot be; and as it is appointed for us to die, blessed be the Lord that death to us is swallowed up in victory, and that we have such a knowledge of the truth as inspires with a confidence of triumph when the trial comes. We are Christ's, and His relation to us affords us a security that death cannot violate. The mind may well be peaceful that is stayed on Him, whatever may betide.

My dearest love to Mary. I thank her, too, most heartily for her sympathy. Both of you give me your prayers. You both have those of, my dear George,

*Your Friend, Brother, and Pastor,  
Israel Atkinson.*

To Mr. Hipwell.

Brighton, September 3rd, 1880.

My dear Brother Hipwell,

Thanks for your kind note. Have been laid aside from work since the last Sunday in June. Suspect that I am a confirmed invalid for life. The mischief is an affection of the kidneys, commonly known as "Bright's disease." I suppose, therefore, that I have seen Olney for the last time. It seems that life may be continued for a time, but that there is no just ground to look for a return of health.

But all is right and well. I am not overtaken as by a thief in the night.

The precious principles which have been a sure support through all the trials of a chequered life are all-sufficient now that I am standing on the confines of eternity.

Am glad to hear you are better. God in mercy restore you completely, and give you the blessing of full health of soul with the restoration. Hope the fire at Newport may be an over-ruled evil.

Mention me affectionately to Mrs. Hipwell and the family. The good Lord reward them for their many kindnesses. Would that they all knew my Saviour—the Elixir of life, the Antidote of death!

Am exceedingly feeble, but from appearance one would hardly think anything is the matter. Appetite is mercifully good, all things considered, and the doctors allow me to gratify it in reason, but will not permit me to touch a stimulant.

God bless you. So prays

*Your Brother in Jesus,  
Israel Atkinson.*

To Mr. Hipwell.

Brighton: September 12th, 1880.

My dear Brother Hipwell,

Many thanks for your kind letter. I can have no doubt that it is the will of the Lord of life and death that I shall soon go hence, and I cannot but feel that in such a condition it is a boundless privilege to be able to say without feigning, "Thy will be done." This blessed privilege is mine. I am as cheerful as a rising lark on a sunny May morning. But for this precious favor I am the debtor of my dear Lord. For I have indeed felt that to depart now had in it something of the "cutting off of days." At another time my sins seemed to

have all their evil uncovered, and to be let loose upon me like so many bloodhounds. And at another time unbelief in its worst, its atheistic, form threatened to swallow up all my hope and joy. But grace has overcome the first, the un-submissive feeling, as that is illustrated in the divine Fatherhood. Grace, too, has mastered the second mischief, as that precious principle is revealed, illustrated, magnified, and ministered through the cross. And grace has overcome the atheism of unbelief by showing me my God in my understanding, my conscience, my life.

It is no wonder that you should have forgotten, in view of the many things which demand your attention, that I spoke to you some time ago in a letter, not of the school, but of the chapel. We had determined to put a new roof on the chapel, but my illness has put that project quite in abeyance.

If feebly, "I have fought the good fight"; if lamely, "I have finished the course"; and if imperfectly, "I have kept the faith/" I am now looking for the coming of the Master to put the crown upon His gracious purposes and proceedings concerning me by taking me to Himself, where I am looking to be holy and without blame before Him in love for ever and ever.

God bless you, even my God. So prays

*Affectionately yours in Jesus,  
Israel Atkinson.*

To Mr. Masterson.  
38, Rose Hill Terrace,  
Brighton: October 12th, 1880.

My dear Christian Brother,

I have much pleasure in forwarding a copy of the Memoir of Mr. Sedgwick for our venerable brother Dickerson. We were, I think, to have given you a

copy of the reports of our little societies, children of the church, when you were here, but failed to do so. I have forwarded these with the pamphlet. Many thanks for your kind expressions relative to myself. On the whole, looking back some six weeks, I am unquestionably stronger, but I can hardly persuade myself that I am on the road to health, Indeed, my impression is that I shall be an invalid, more or less, as long as I may continue. This, however, is with the Master. I am wishing and the wish is in a good measure gratified to stand to the surrender to His bidding, whether to remain or to depart.

My daughter unites with me in Christian regards. Mention me also, please, to Mr. Dickerson.

*Yours truly in Him,  
Israel Atkinson.*

To Mr. Mitchell.

38, Rose Hill Terrace^

Brighton: Dec. 8th, 1880.

My dear Edward,

I am once more sending to you to ask you for a Lord's-day, for January 9th. We shall all be glad if you can come.

You will have heard, no doubt, that we have invited Mr. Gray for three months, with a view to something further. May the Lord of all order all for us after such a manner as shall preserve our union and increase our usefulness!

I am about in the same state of health, speaking as I feel, from day to day. But as there is no radical improvement, there is without doubt a real, however gradual, deterioration. But of this I am not disquieted, though I am

not now rejoicing in hope. I might have been disquieted even to terror, but, blessed be my good Lord, I have the precious gift of "a calm and thankful heart, from every murmur free."

My dearest love to Lizzie. I trust you are well, happy in your work, and rejoicing in tokens of favor.

For your health's sake I trust that you do not neglect good hard walking exercise. If you would preach well, walk well.

Peace be with you. An early line will oblige

*Affectionately yours in Him,*

*Israel Atkinson.*

To Mrs. Bax.

Brighton: November 15th, 1880.

My dear Child,

Persuaded of the strong feeling which your loving concern about your father will beget in your bosom respecting yesterday's\* engagements, I hasten to gratify your desire by informing you that I was helped through. I was led to the words for a text in the morning which served for that purpose a little over thirty-eight years ago, when I walked from Houghton to Woodside to fulfill my very first engagement, which words are, "Salvation is of the Lord." In effect, my first text has served for every subsequent text, and the thought would thrust itself upon me as it seemed that yesterdays might be the last, it appeared that the very same text literally might be an appropriate finish to my humble testimony of the Gospel.

The weather was very unfavorable wind and rain all day. Enjoyed the morning service, but felt that the evening engagement was rather too much for my little strength. For indeed my strength is but very little. The old tent is

very truly, albeit perhaps somewhat prematurely, getting into a rickety condition, and it sometimes appears that an attempt to repair it in one place, like similar attempts on other old and worn out things, puts it out of sorts in another. This, however, gives me no trouble, or even disquiet. It serves rather to remind me of a house not made with hands, provided and bespoken, which never gets out of repair.

We unite in love.

*\* This was the last occasion on which Mr. Atkinson occupied the pulpit on a Lord's-day.*

*I am, your affectionate Father,  
Israel Atkinson.*

To Mr. Masterson.  
38, Rose Hill Terrace,  
Brighton: Jan, 18th, 1881.

My dear Brother,

I am very much obliged by your kind and sympathetic line of the nth inst. My health varies a good deal. Sometimes I am feeling to be almost chargeable with idleness, and at others that I shall very soon join the most active and happy society in the universe. As, however, I do not think that I am radically any better, I cannot but conclude that, though I am not sensible of any marked change, the disease is doing its work. But I do not know, and, through mercy, I can leave the matter with a tolerable degree of calmness in His hands who knows the end from the beginning.

I am not so elevated in mind respecting the future as I was awhile ago, when it seemed to me probable that my time here was about closing. Now my condition is somewhat of a realization of the prayer—

*"Give me a calm, a thankful heart,"*

*From every murmur free. "*

I entirely share your sentiments about our need of just such a salvation as God has provided for His people in Christ. One of the most important characteristics of the fullness of Christ is that it is remedial. Unless my observation has misled me, this fact has been wholly ignored by many who rank high in popular opinion as preachers, and a great deal too much forgotten by others who perhaps may have been tempted to aspire after popularity. Many a fine sermon, in the preacher's estimation, God has made nothing of in the hearer's heart. I remember in my early days I preached two very fine sermons all about Jesus Christ on one occasion, and I thought a good deal about them, and looked for some favorable mention of them. I never heard a word about them. On the same evening I tried to preach from the text, "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Here was a remedy. A poor man in the congregation needed it. God applied it, and the man leaped for joy. Men are lost. God's salvation is the only remedy. Then are we doing the work of our Master when devils confess of us that "These are the servants of the most high God, that show unto men the way of salvation."

Mention me kindly to the venerable Dickerson. I trust that God will give him power in some measure to desire the desirable and to delight in the pleasurable so long as He continues him here.

My dear daughter unites with me in Christian regard. Peace and prosperity be with you. So prays

*Yours in Him,  
Israel Atkinson.*

To Mr. Norman.

Brighton: January 19th, 1881.

My dear Christian Brother,

Last week my Leicester friends were brought strongly to mind by receiving a letter which rendered it necessary for me to say, in reply, that I could not serve the friends there this year as I had done heretofore.

To me the year 1880 has been a momentous one. Therein practically my life's labors have been brought to a close, and my life itself has been, like a tree that is notched with the woodman's hatchet, marked to be removed. I did not look for these things at the beginning of the year, but they are come, and I would not murmur, albeit the providence has sometimes seemed to me to have somewhat of the cutting off of days in it.

My health varies a good deal, and as I myself have never made observation of the progress of this disease from which I am suffering, I have no settled judgment about the issue, saying that I am strongly persuaded that I shall be more or less of an invalid, however long or short a time I may live. I am not so elevated in mind as I was some time since, when I thought it probable that I should before this time depart to the better country. But I suffer no terror. I am on occasion indulged with some very free talking to my Father in heaven, though I do not get so much response from Him through the Word as I could desire. I am enabled yet to talk a little to the people on Monday and Thursday evenings, and sometimes get a sweet relish of the truth while so doing. On the whole, my spiritual condition may be justly enough regarded as a realization of the prayer of the hymn—

*"Give me a calm, a thankful heart,  
From every murmur free."*

Mention me in brotherly love to any of my brethren in Leicester who would care for the poor trifle. Peace be with you. So prays

*Yours in the Saviour of sinners,  
Israel Atkinson.*

To Mr. Elliott.

38, Rose Hill Terrace,  
Brighton: Jan. 19th, 1881.

My dear George,

I find it is three months since I had your last kind letter, and that it is just so long I have been in your debt without acknowledging the obligation. I see no way out of this wrong but as has been the case respecting many others confession and forgiveness. I confess forgive me this sin.

Now permit me to wish you and your beloved wife joy on the safe birth of your second child. She is, indeed, brought into the world just as the said world hereabouts at least has put on one of her wildest of wintry manners. Well, without complaining, there is a good deal in the weather just now that may serve to impress observers of the world with an idea of a good deal that is met with in it.

I am strongly reminded of my own history in thinking of your present experience. My second child, Mrs. Bax, was born in November, 1840, the beginning of a bitterly cold winter. Early in 1841 we left our beloved circle of friends and the ministry at Mount Zion for the country, under the guidance of the cloud. But oh what a wrench was that separation! What a loss was that change respecting the ministry! I suspected much of this before the event,

but I never dreamed to the extent of half the reality.

The peculiar pleasures of those early days never returned to me and mine. Say not I am a prophet of ill if I foretell you that you and yours will fare no better than I and mine. Life will become another kind of thing, and not better, to which it will be necessary for you to bow and bend. But though the peculiar pleasures of our early days returned not to me and mine, and those you and yours experienced will not return to you, yet we had other pleasures, and so will you have. Nevertheless this may be laid to your account with advantage life will never be more desirable than it has been, and the more you become practically acquainted with even the best side of the present state, the more you will appreciate that provision of grace for the future, "the better country."

I feel very strongly about poor Mary going to a certain place in quest of bread, and getting nothing much better than a stone. When will preachers grasp the simple truth that the Gospel which they are sent to proclaim is wholly remedial in its nature?

I was much interested in your account of what you had done respecting Faith and Mr. ----- . May it be as seed fallen into prepared ground!

So far as I can judge at present, it seems to me that the prospects of Ebenezer are hopeful. I feel this to be a great mercy. Should the good Lord settle someone in my place, whom He will own and the people receive, before I go hence, it will wonderfully smooth my going.

We have had some interesting Bible classes, at which, I think, you are never forgotten.

Bekky unites with me in love to yourself and dear Mary.

I have asked you to forgive the not writing; please add at the same time forgiveness for this poor writing from,

*Lovingly yours in Him,  
Israel Atkinson.*

To Mrs. Bax.

Brighton;

Sunday Morning, Feb. 6th, 1881.

My dear Child,

I do not know that I ought to say that my home is a prison, but I may say that, being detained from the sanctuary, the thought of being imprisoned has occurred to me.

Last Friday week the doctor sent a very peremptory order that I should avoid exposure, fearing, as I suppose, a chill; and on Monday last I had a severe attack of acute indigestion that very much reduced my strength, and this has been followed by some chilly symptoms which have necessitated me to pay more regard to the doctor's order than at the time I intended. Hence I am at home this morning instead of being in the sanctuary.

I am somewhat better this morning, but it is very certain that the process of digestion goes on but very imperfectly, and that all the organs of the body are feeling the debilitating effects of the disease. But without God nothing I feel has come to pass, and without Him nothing that I fear can come to pass. Must not all then be well?

By a line from Mr. Crowther the other day I learn that he is still an invalid, and so much so that he has been out of his own house but once this

year, Through the kindness of the Lord I have hardly yet been kept in entirely through the day, excepting that terrible Tuesday, the 18th ult.,\* and the following day. Yesterday and the day before I had a turn up and down the garden, my old walk, for about an hour on each occasion.

I need not assure you that it will be a pleasure to see you when your business requires you to run up to London.

What a world of distress, disease, and death is this! How good is an expected end! In the better country there will be no distress, no disease, and no death. What must it be to be there! As sinners saved by grace, I trust we shall share the bliss—you and

*\* January 18th, 1881. The day of the heaviest snowstorm known in England since 1837.*

*Your affectionate Father,  
Israel Atkinson.*

To Mr. Hipwell.  
38, Rose Hill Terrace,  
Brighton: March 22nd, 1881.

My dear Hipwell,

Your generous enquiry about my health and care for me call again by this time for another line of information from me.

Radically I am no better. But neither am I at least as to my sense of the matter very much worse. Still I am free from pain as heretofore. The muscular feebleness is at times so funny as almost to make me quietly laugh at myself. Altogether this is a very singular feature of the disease. Sometimes, after breakfast, if I wish to go up stairs, I can spring up two steps at a time; but, after dinner, I have often hardly enough strength to

stand at all. Another remarkable fact is that I am not wasting in any appreciable degree.

But I do not disguise from myself that the tent is being taken down. Rather it seems perfectly certain to me that the stakes are being loosened and the cords slackened. But the business thus far has been conducted with wonderful gentleness; so much so, indeed, to my seeming that you will know how to bear with the expression I could kiss the hand that deals so gently with me.

I do not get a return of the sweetly elevated feeling that possessed me at the earlier part of the attack. Nevertheless I am by no means depressed. I am permitted to be not only on speaking, but on talking terms with God. But this wonderful privilege requires for its completeness something else the talking needs to be not all on one side. I want Him not to be "silent to me."

I have made a very much closer acquaintance during the last two years with affliction and dying than I ever made before; but these, like some other things, and indeed some persons, have not improved thereby their position in my estimation. For their own sakes I love affliction and dying now just as little as ever, and I am just as little in sympathy with them. Paul knew he was to be unclothed by them, but Paul never liked them. There is something in them at which my whole soul revolts, and from which I naturally shrink as from something which is in the highest degree unnatural, unlovable, and undesirable. Nothing short of a supernatural hope of an everlasting good beyond reconciles my mind to them at all. Blessed be God, I have this. Blessed be God, therefore, that though affliction and dying are inevitable evils, they are not un-subdued and un-remedied evils, If they are of the nature of death to me, they are made ministers of life to me. Death is

not to me a skeleton armed with a scythe, but an angel furnished with a key; but it requires a peculiar eye salve to see the angel with his key.

Mention me kindly to Mrs. H. and family. Mrs. Bax has been here to see me. She and the other members of my family are well.

Grace be with you, enabling you to live, and, when the time comes, to die. So prays,

*Affectionately yours in Jesus,*

*Israel Atkinson.*

To Mr. Norman.

38, Rose Hill Terrace,

Brighton: April 11th, 1881.

My dear Brother,

My health is much the same as when I last wrote; but as I certainly am not any stronger, I suspect that I am somewhat weaker; and I do not disguise from myself the fact that the tabernacle is being taken down. On Friday next Good Friday, as it is called the friends here will hold a public meeting as usual, to commemorate my entering on the pastorate of the church in 1854. But there will be this peculiarity attached to our meeting next Friday it will be the last. My pastorate will be brought to an end, if not by death, by resignation, before Good Friday in 1882.

That this fact has its solemnity for my mind will not be doubted by you, nor will it surprise you. On reflection, in one view of the matter, I am ready to say after Jacob, "Few and evil have been the days of the years of my pilgrimage," but, in another view, I cannot but feel that my ministry, compared with that of others whom I have known, has been mercifully distinguished by the blessing of the Lord, and that it affords ground for some

holy satisfaction and grateful acknowledgment. If I have not been so successful as I have desired, I have been abundantly more successful than I have deserved. From the very first I was favored with signs following of the Lord's approbation and blessing, and to the last He has not left me without a similar witness. What a debtor!

Now I seem to myself to be on a kind of border land pretty nearly to have done with this world, and brought within a near distance of the next. My state of mind is mercifully calm. It does not rise just now to a being "willing rather to be absent from the body," but a little heavenly influence brought to bear would be enough to lift it even as high as that.

At times the thought occurs, What would it be now to have no hope! The state of a dying sinner having no hope seems to me next in terribleness to hell itself. How rich is the grace that saves a sinner! How sweet is the pleasure! How secure the safety! How blessed the expectation which the salvation of God affords now! How wondrous the satisfaction it will afford us hereafter for ever and ever! But it is needless for me to write of these things to you. I congratulate you, however, on your knowledge of them.

At times I fancy myself preparing to pay my dear friends at De Montfort Street a visit; and then again it seems a good deal more likely that I shall go to heaven than to Leicester.

The blessing of the Lord be upon you, in all riches and appropriateness. So prays,

*Your unworthy brother in the Lord,  
Israel Atkinson.*

## IN MEMORIAM

### ISRAEL ATKINSON,

For 28 years Pastor of Ebenezer Chapel, Brighton, who fell on sleep in Jesus, May 4th, 1881.

" I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith : henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day ; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing." {2 Timothy. 4: 7, 8}.

*Rest, brother, rest; faith's battle won,  
Now from thy Lord receive thy crown;  
Made thine by Christ, both brave and free,  
Amid His earnest chivalry.*

*Rest, brother, rest; life's work is done;  
No more the cold wind, rain, and snow,  
But balmy breezes, soft and sweet,  
And light and joy where'er ye go.*

*Where thorns and briers often pierce,  
Life's desert paths no more ye tread;  
No more shall angry tempests break*

*In pit'less fury o'er thy head.*

*For, lo I the city of the blest,  
Its pearly gates and streets appear—  
The prize long sought through many a storm.  
Through toil and conflict, many a tear.*

*Take off thy armour now and rest;  
The heat and dust of time are past.  
Lie down and rest, for ever rest,  
For peace and home are reached at last.*

*And yet arise; now with thy God,  
Thy theme the same—a Saviour's blood!  
Amid God's host, redeemed and free,  
Exult and praise eternally.*

*W. P. B.*

*Brighton, May, 1881.*

*W. H. BRIDGE, PRINTER, NORTH ROAD, BRIGHTON.*